

**TESTIMONY OF THE INTERNATIONAL FORMULA COUNCIL  
BEFORE THE CONNECTICUT JOINT COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT  
REGARDING HB 5117 – AN ACT CONCERNING GENETICALLY-ENGINEERED FOODS  
FEBRUARY 22, 2012**

The International Formula Council (IFC) appreciates the opportunity to comment on House Bill 5117. The IFC is an association of manufacturers and marketers of formulated nutrition products, e.g., infant formulas and adult nutritionals, whose members are predominantly based in North America.

The primary focus of the IFC and its member companies is and will always remain the health and welfare of infants and young children. The product we manufacture, infant formula, is the most highly regulated food in the world and continues to be the only safe, nutritious and recommended alternative to breast milk. To that end, we respectfully oppose House Bill 5117, which would require labeling on all processed foods that may contain ingredients that have been entirely or partially produced with genetic engineering.

Infant formula ingredients are carefully quality-controlled and manufactured to the highest industry and government standards. Some infant formula ingredients can be derived from widely used genetically-engineered crops. An extensive body of rigorous national and international scientific evidence supports the safety of these ingredients.

U.S. regulatory agencies, including the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Environmental Protection Agency, have studied genetically-engineered foods for more than 30 years, in conjunction with individual state governments, to ensure that crops produced with biotechnology are safe to eat and environmentally sound. In a 1992 FDA Policy Statement, the agency stated: "FDA has no basis for concluding that bioengineered foods differ from other foods in any meaningful or uniform way, or that, as a class, foods developed by the new techniques present any different or greater safety concern than foods developed by traditional plant breeding." Additionally, health professional organizations, including the World Health Organization, the National Academy of Sciences, the American Medical Association, and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (formerly the American Dietetic Association), have endorsed the safety of crops enhanced through biotechnology.

Mandatory labeling of foods that contain ingredients produced with genetic engineering would add to consumer confusion. As stated above, FDA has concluded such foods do not differ from other foods in any meaningful way. Therefore requiring mandatory labeling is unnecessary, and would create concern and potential alarm even though the scientific consensus concludes these products are safe. Furthermore, mandatory labeling would create an undue burden on manufacturers and retailers; again without benefitting public health and safety. The FDA has established voluntary labeling guidelines and consumers who wish to purchase foods produced without genetically-engineered ingredients can purchase products labeled as such. Consumers also have the option to purchase products that are certified as organic under the USDA's National Organic Program.

In summary, we do not believe mandatory labeling provides any meaningful benefit to consumers. In fact, such labeling will likely have the opposite effect – creating confusion and unnecessary alarm. For these reasons, IFC opposes House Bill 5117.

---

\* IFC members are: Abbott Nutrition; Mead Johnson Nutrition; Nestlé Infant Nutrition; PBM Products, LLC, A Perrigo Company; and Pfizer Nutrition.